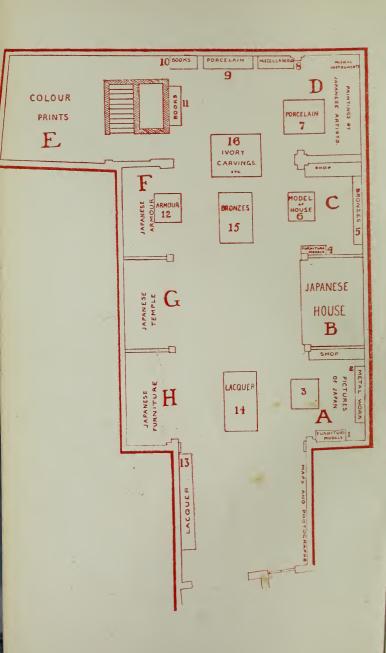
COLOUR PRINTS.



Japanese Exhibition one penny. 1902.



# Whitechapel Art Gallery,

HIGH STREET, WHITECHAPEL.

## SUMMER EXHIBITION.

1902.

## CATALOGUE OF COLOUR PRINTS.

### BAY E.-SMALL ROOM.

COLOUR-PRINTING reached the highest point of perfection in Japan during the latter half of the eighteenth century.

It may be well to offer a brief account of the mechanical process employed in the printing, before proceeding to a slight sketch of the history of the art. First, then, the artist drew his design in black outline on thin, semi-transparent paper, using the fine brush-hitsu-employed by the Japanese equally for drawing and for writing. This drawing was pasted, face downward, on the block, a plank three-quarters of an inch thick, and usually of cherry-wood. It is to be noted that the side of the grain was presented to the working surface, and not the end, as is the present practice among European engravers. A little oil of sesamum was then rubbed into the back of the paper to increase its transparency, and to facilitate clean cutting, and the engraver began his work. His sole implement was a small sharp knife, wherewith he cut along each edge of every line of the drawing, following the form of the brush strokes with the minutest accuracy. This done, the superfluous wood was cleared away with chisels and gouges, leaving the outline standing. From the block thus completed a few impressions were taken, on paper as thin as that used for the original drawing, and on these the artist indicated his colour scheme. One such proof was prepared (as a rule) for every colour to be printed, and each was pasted, face downward, upon another block. Once more the knife came into play, but this time everything was cut away beyond the edge of the colour mass being provided for, so that in the end a set of blocks remained, one carrying the outline, one the red colour masses, one the blue, one the yellow, and so forth. The method of printing, both of the key block proofs and of the coloured impressions, was the simplest possible. The paper, damped to an exact degree, neither too much nor too little, was laid upon the block and rubbed over with a small pad; being carried from block to block till it was lifted from the last finished print. Accuracy of "register" was secured merely by angles cut into corners of the blocks. The colours—they were water colours—were mixed with rice paste, on the blocks themselves, each in its appointed place, by means of broad brushes. Extreme skill was needed in this simple operation of printing, which, indeed, may be regarded as only a varied process of hand colouring.

Prints in simple black from wood blocks were made in Japan at a very remote period; it is, indeed, impossible to fix the date of the importation of the art from China. It is known to have been practised by Buddhist priests for many centuries before it was applied to the illustration of books. The first illustrated book which Professor Anderson has been able to trace was issued in 1608, and was printed in black alone. Such books (usually uncoloured, however) were produced all through the seventeenth century, but there is no record of the artists' names until its close, when Hishigawa Moronobu began his powerful work. This artist revived the school of painting of Iwasa Matahei, who, sixty or seventy years before, had turned for his subjects to the ordinary life of the Japanese people, a subject little used by the older painters. It is to this school of Ukiyo-yé, the popular school, that almost all the works belong of the artists who gave them to the Japanese public in the form of prints, in books or in single sheets.

Moronobu used no colour in his sheet prints, though a few of his books were excellently hand-coloured. But the first use of separate blocks for the production of colour prints was the achievement of Torii Kiyonobu, founder of the long line of Torii artists, whose chief work lay in illustrating theatrical

scenes and characters.

Both Kiyonobu and Kiyomasu issued many hand-coloured prints before adopting the device of printing from various blocks, and in the latter process they employed at first but two colours, a green and a pale red. Their pupils and later successors worked throughout the eighteenth century. Kiyotada, Kiyohiro, Kiyoshigé, Kiyomitsu, Kiyonaga, Kiyotsune and Kiyomine were the most distinguished among them, the greatest of the school being Kiyonaga. Kiyomine worked on in the nineteenth century, deteriorating and coarsening with his younger contemporaries. Kiyonaga's work was performed between 1770 and 1790, and he exercised great influence on contemporary artists of other schools; notably on Shuncho and Shunman, pupils of Shunsho, the delineator of actors, on Yeishi, founder of the Hosoi school, and on Utamaro, pupil of Toriyama Sekiyen. Utamaro developed a style of his own, and at the end of the eighteenth century was one of the most distinctive and charming of all the artists of Ukiyo-yé.

In the space available it is impossible to do much more than mention by name a few of the great number of artists of the popular school whose work was accomplished in the eighteenth century. Nishimura Shigénaga, pupil of Nishimura Shigenobu, became in his turn master of Suzuki Harunobu, the artist who brought colour-printing to perfection in the periods Horeiki and Meiwa. Harunobu's pupil Koriusai left a great number of prints of famous beauties, and his style passed through three stages, the first showing everywhere the influence of his master, the second being more distinctively his own, and the last inclining to the manner of Kitao Shigemasa, who was master of Kitao Masanobu (also notable as a novelist) and Kitao Masayoshi. Shunman also became a pupil of

Shigemasa.

Ishikawa Toyonobu, in the first half of the eighteenth century, produced many exceedingly graceful female figures and groups, and his pupil Toyoharu taught the art to Utagawa Toyokuni and Toyohiro. Shunsho, already mentioned, was master of many pupils who copied his style, the greatest among them, however, being one who cut himself adrift from all schools, all older conventions, and who is now known the world over as Hokusai—the Old Man Mad with Drawing. Hokusai died at the age of ninety, in 1849.

Hiroshigé, although a pupil of Toyohiro, may also be classed as an independent artist as regards his landscapes, his most distinctive work. Nowhere in Japanese art has such respect for the limitations of the material in hand been joined with such contempt for the formulæ of the schools as in the

landscapes of Hiroshigé.

The pictures hung in the frieze are mostly by artists of the Utagawa school, and by Hiroshige. They are splendid in colour and dramatic in composition, but less delicate in treatment than the prints hung on the line

Owing to the various types of the frames, which are lent by different owners, the artistic effect of the prints, as a whole, has had to be sacrificed to a desire to add to the interest of the collection by maintaining the order of the historical sequence.

### Katsushika Hokusai.

Original drawing for cutting on block for one of a series of 100 poets, never completed.

2 Katsushika Hokusai.

Finished print for the set of 100 poets.

3 Torii Kiyonaga.

Ink proof. Asaina, a hero who descended into hell, and demons.

4 Torii Kiyonobu.

Actor with straw hat and fan. Hand-coloured print, lacquered and gilt. First used colour print. Early 18th century.

5 Okumara Masanobu.

Girl with lantern; youth hiding under raised floor. Hand-coloured print with gold sprinkling. Early 18th century.

6 Nishimura Shigenaga.

Triptych print in black. Ladies at toilet. Uncoloured print issued contemporaneously with hand-coloured prints. Early 18th century.

7 Torii Kiyohiro.

Girl in rain opening umbrella. Colour print of the earliest sort in the two colours first used (red and green). Early 18th century.

### 8 Torii Kiyomitsu.

Actor with mirror, printed in three colours (blue and two reds).

### 9 Gototei Kunisada.

(Signed Toyokuni) the processes of colour printing. Three sheets to be joined. In imitation of Utamaro, who substituted women for men, though men always execute the colour prints.

### 10 Ichiyusai Kuniyoshi.

Hand coloured copy of print.

### 11 Koriusai.

(Chief pupil of Harunobu). Girls with mirror. Hachirakaki print, intended to hang on pillar of house. As these were soon dirtied, and consequently destroyed, comparatively few have survived. Middle 18th century.

### 12 Suzuki Harunobu.

Children with snowball.

Suzuki Harunobu worked between 1755 and 1775. He was a pupil of Nishimura Shigenaga, and he brought about a great development in the art of colour printing. It was he who first filled his whole space with background and colour, and he first used colours of varying degrees of opacity. He also invented a method of indicating white outlines and patterns in plain embossing, without printed line. He devoted himself largely to pictures of girls and women, and his great characteristics were a peculiar sweetness and grace of drawing, and a very beautiful and harmonious colour.

### 13 Suzuki Harunobu.

Lady in Court dress. This is a rare example of a print by this artist with a plain background.

### 14 Suzuki Harunobu.

Girl and child blowing bubbles. Middle 18th century.

### 15 Suzuki Harunobu.

Youth and two girls on ledge before waterfall.

### 16 Suzuki Harunobu.

Girls playing a game.

### 17 Suzuki Harunobu.

The Japanese, like the Greeks, developed an ideal type of beauty for men and women. The ideal type of Japanese female beauty is an impossibly slender figure (cf. No. 17). The face has oblique eyes and eyebrows, full cheeks, and a tiny mouth. The head narrows towards the brows. It is not our Western type of beauty, but it has a grace of its own when the eyes grow accustomed to its novelty.

#### 18 Suzuki Harunobu.

Youth in winter dress, and boy with toy-archery implements.

#### Shiba Kokan. 19

(Pupil of Harunobu). Woman throwing Sake cups over a precipice, probably with wishes. Middle and late 18th century.

#### Koriusai. 20

Child with tortoise.

#### 2 T Koriusai.

Youth with hawk, and girls gathering egg-fruit.

#### Katsugawa Shunsho. 22

An actor in character. In these prints of actors the conventional attitudes of Japanese players are represented with much vigour.

#### Ippitsusai Buncho. 23

An actor. Late 18th century.

### 24 Katsugawa Shunko.

Actor in female character. The characters were always taken by men. This shows a man acting the part of a woman. Late 18th century.

#### 25 Katsugawa Shunyei.

Actors in characters as murderers. Late 18th century.

#### 26 Ippitsusai Buncho.

Actor in character of Yuranosuke. Yuranosuke was the leader of the 47 Ronin.

#### Katsugawa Shunyei. 27

The wrestler Onogawa, with attendant pupil.

#### Katsugawa Shunyei. 28

The wrestler Tanikaze, with attendant pupil.
Onogawa and Tanikaze were two great wrestlers at
the end of the 18th century, who never succeeded in beating each other, though they beat all the other wrestlers.

#### Katsugawa Shunsho. 29

View of Enoshima. The first Japanese print known to exhibit shadow. About 1775.

#### Shunsho. 30

Actors in character. In one case the actor is in the character of a man; in the other that of a woman.

#### Shunzan. 31

Lady and children on horse, with servants. sheet of three. Late 18th and early 19th centuries. 32 Shunsho and Shigemasa.

This is taken from a book called "The Mirror of Beautiful Women."

33 Choki.

Man and ladies in conversation. An admirer, possibly a pupil of Kiyonaga. Late 18th century.

34 Torii Kiyonaga.

Girls on sea-shore. Late 18th century.

This artist was the greatest of the Torii School, and had great influence on the other contemporary designers of colour prints, Yeishi, Utamaro, and others.

35 Chobunsai Yeishi.

Lady examining Makimono. Late 18th century.

36 Yeishi.

Female head. Yeishi was originally a member of the Kano school, who took to colour printing.

37 Chobunsai Yeishi.

Female figure, erect.

38 Yeisui.

Female head, with tree peony. Yeisui was a pupil of Yeishi. Late 18th century.

39 Lady on horseback with attendant. By Rekisentei Yeiri.

Pupil of Yeishi. Late 18th century.

40 Yeisui.

Female head, scissors, and flower. Late 18th century.

41 Kitagawa Utamaro.

Lady with arrows-parlour archery.

Kitagawa Utamaro was son and pupil of Toriyama Sekiyen, a painter of the Kano school. He worked chiefly in the latter part of the 18th century and died early in the 19th century. He devoted himself chiefly to drawings of women, and his work was characterised by a great grace of line and pose, and a very harmonious colour.

42 Kitagawa Utamaro.

Head of a lady.

43 Kitagawa Utamaro.

Mother carrying child to bed under mosquito net.

44 Kitagawa Utamaro.

Head of a lady. Pictures Nos. 43, 46, and 48, are signed Sho-Mei Utamaro, meaning "The True Utamaro." He used this signature because his ordinary signature was so much forged.

45 Kitagawa Utamaro.

Two ladies and servant. This scene is really a parallel, with the women's figures substituted, for the 3rd scene in the story of the 47 Ronin, where the Lord Asano attacks his enemy. His crest is on the woman's sleeve. Utamaro delighted in this substituting women for men in well-known stories.

- 46 Kitagawa Utamaro.
  Head of a lady.
- 47 Kitagawa Utamaro.
  Female head.
- 48 Kitagawa Utamaro.
  Two heads.
- 49 Kitagawa Utamaro. Head of a lady.
- 50 Utamaro II.

Three ladies. Utamaro II. was a pupil of Utamaro, who married his master's widow, and took his name. Early 19th century.

51 Shiko.

Girl and youth. Late 18th century.

52 Kikumaro.

Pupil of Utamaro. Lady's head. Late 18th century or early 19th century.

53 Hokusai.

Country walk.

Katsushika Hokusai was born 1760, and died 1849. He was first a pupil of Katsugawa Shunsho, at that time using the name of Shunro. He left that school and worked in a new and independent manner, his style passing through several changes, so that an expert can date almost any work of his within a year or two by the evidence of style alone. He excelled in many departments, and he depicted the spirit and action of the common life about him with great vigour and effect. He was an indefatigable worker until death overtook him, and to the last he protested that he was still learning and still improving. He said that if he could only live to be a hundred and ten years of age, then he would be a great painter indeed. He invented a new manner in landscape colour prints, using few colours and treating his subject very boldly as a decoration.

54 Hokusai.

Noble ladies by river.

55 Hokusai.

56 Hokusai.

Picnic party viewing Fuji.

57 Hokusai.

Bridge of boats at Sano.

58 Hokusai.

Bridge of Temma at Osaka. Fête of lanterns.

59 Hokusai.

View of Fuji-San from timber yard.

Hokusai was a painter of "passing life." He had the genius to see that a timber-yard might be as effective a subject for a painter as any of the recognized ones. We have here a pole cutting the great cone of Fuji-San, somewhat as we Londoners, coming up Ludgate Hill, see the steeple of St. Martin's cutting the great dome of St. Paul's, our London substitute for the sacred mountain of Japan.

60 Hokusai.

View of Fujisan.

61 Hokusai.

Sheet from a book. Travellers resting in a wisteria garden.

62 Hokusai.

Girl with faggots. Printed picture, with poem written by hand, to hang on blossoming tree in spring. Very rare, as few have survived. The poem is written by the purchaser of the print.

63 Hokusai.

(a) Taiko (or drum-shaped) Bridge at Kameido.

(b) Bridge of Yatsu, a viaduct across a large marsh.

64 Hokusai.

(a) Mino waterfall.

(b) Roben waterfall, with bathers.

65 Hokusai.

View of Fujisan from the terrace of a pagoda. The poses of the figures, which are seen from the back, have a grace so consummate that we feel, here, the genius of a supreme master. The sense of limitation which Europeans feel in Japanese art, owing to its conventionality, is transcended, and we recognise the genius of a man who was a great artist for all times and for all peoples.

66 Hokusai.

A Surimono. These were sent, after the end of the 18th century, on all occasions of interest.

67 Kikugawa Yeizan.

Youth on horseback, with girls walking. Early 19th century.

68 Kikugawa Yeizan.

This charming picture of a mother and child reminds one of Sir R. Alcock's statement that "Japan is a paradise of babies."

69 Kikugawa Yeizan.

The baby is playing at being a famous Japanese Giant, who, like Goliath, was defeated by a young warrior.

70 Hokkei.

(a) Surimono. Flowers.

(b) Surimono. Wave and rocks.

Early 19th century. In both these embossing is skilfully used as a substitute for outline. (See also Nos. 12, 13, 17, and 19.)

71 Hokkei.

(Pupil of Hokusai.) Surimono. Hermit on a mountain.

72 Keisai Yeisen.

Surimono. Ferry-boat on a river. Early 19th century.

73 Utagawa Toyokuni.

Actors, in the characters of wrestlers defying each other. Late 18th and early 19th centuries.

74 Utagawa Toyokuni.

Five-sheet print. Women enacting a feudal procession. Fuji-San in the background.

75 Utagawa Toyokuni.

Note the exquisite harmony of the pinks and yellows. Colour prints are usually issued in sets of three, but the composition is so skilful that each print composes perfectly by itself.

76 Gototei Kunisada.

(Pupil of Toyokuni.) Ghost rising from a pond, with lotus leaves. Early 19th century.

77 Utagawa Kuniyasu.

(Pupil of Toyokuni.) Lady with grasshopper in a cage. Early 19th century.

78 Ichiyusai Kuniyoshi.

Famous hero bursting an iron portcullis. One of a series of 108 Japanese heroes executed by this artist in imitation of the 108 Chinese heroes. Notice the elaborate tattooing of pine leaves, maple leaves, snakes, and river. Early 19th century.

79 Shunsen.

(a) Children gathering mushrooms.

(b) Ladies and children on shore of a lake.

80 Kunisada.

### 81 Hiroshigé.

Early 19th century.

Woman treading out clothes by a stream. Early

19th century.

Ichiriusai Hiroshige was at first a fireman, and then became a pupil of Utagawa Toyohiro, an artist who lived in the early part of the 19th century. Hiroshige and his pupil, called Hiroshige II., executed many colour prints illustrative of famous views in Japan, in a manner invented by Hiroshige himself. He used many other subjects: figures, birds and fishes in particular, but landscape was his speciality.

82 Hiroshigé.

A wonderfully vivid little picture of a Japanese port, which may remind visitors to the Cornish Exhibition of Mr. Dow's painting of St. Ives.

83 Hiroshigé.

Village in snow. Evening.

84 Hiroshigé.

Mandarin ducks.

85 Hiroshigé.

Evening in rice-fields.

86 Hiroshigé.
Cliffs and sea.

87 Kunisada.

Portrait of a lady in winter dress.

88 Geisha.

89 Hiroshigé.

Street scene by moonlight. Print showing shadows, which are very rarely rendered in Japanese art. For long it was said to be the first rendering of shadow; but No. 29 shows that shadows occurred earlier.

90 Hiroshigé.

Temple gate in the cherry-blossom season.

91 Hiroshigé.

Street scene.

92 Kunichika.

(Pupil of Kunisada.) Ladies in boat by moonlight.

93 Hiroshigé.

View of river and flooded country, with herons.

94 Hiroshigé.

Kite in snowy landscape.

95 Hiroshigé.

View of Fuji San, with men on rafts.

### 96 Hiroshigé.

River and bridge by night, with fireworks. The orange red of the fireworks has turned black. This pigment, too, may be seen turning black in Nos. 22 and 26.

97 Hiroshigé. Snow scene.

98 Yoshi-Ikku.

Warriors defeating demons and ghosts.

99 Shigenobu.

Collection of fairy tales in one picture, the chief being Momotaro, the boy found in a peach; The Tonguecut Sparrow; and Kachi-Kachi-Yama, or, the White Hare and the Fox.

100 Yoshitora.

Figures in rain, on crape paper.

101 Kunisada.

(Signed Toyokuni—his master's name.) Lady having her hair dressed.

102 Yoshitora.

Lady being carried in a sedan chair.

Modern drawings of trades and occupations of women.

Contemporary colour prints.

Showing the best work now being produced in colour printing in Japan. Skilful and delicate in colour, these prints show, nevertheless, how much the art has deteriorated.

104 Toshikata.

(Living artist.) Girl with flowers.

105 Ogata Gekko.

(Living artist.) Girls in boat. Triptych.

106 Keisai Yeisen.

Eleven prints illustrating the story of the Fortyseven Ronin. This romance is a fine and typical story of Japanese ideas of honour. The Lord Asano, the former master of the Ronin (lordless men), having been badly insulted by another daimio, Moronao, drew his sword. As this happened in the Shogun's palace he was condemned to death, and allowed to commit Harakiri, the more honourable death by self-destruction. Forty-seven of his followers resolved to avenge his death. They were closely watched, as their desire for revenge was suspected. At last they obtained arms, seized the castle of their master's enemy, and on his refusing to kill himself, slew him. They then committed suicide, by order, as a punishment for their

disorderly act of devotion to their dead master. They came to be regarded as types of loyalty, and have been honoured ever since. The principles of personal loyalty and respect for the law and order, both ingrained in the Japanese mind, are finely opposed in this story, and form an episode of tragic grandeur.

### 107 Kunisada.

(Signed Toyokuni.) Summer Festival on the river at Tokio.

### 108 Kuniyoshi.

Story of the Hojiu Gem. This jewel was brought from Korea and captured by the dragon king under the sea. The rightful owner married a fisher girl, who dived and brought back the gem, burying it in her breast to save it from her pursuers. Her husband found it when he discovered her dead body.

### 109 Kunisada.

(Signed Toyokuni.) A party being carried.

### Ballade of Toyokuni Print.

Was I a Samurai renowned, Two-sworded, fierce, immense of bow? A histrion, angular and profound? A priest? A porter? Child, although I have forgotten clean, I know That in the shade of Fujisan, What time the cherry-orchards blow, I loved you, once, in old Japan. As here you loiter, flowing-gowned, And hugely sashed, with pins a-row, Your quaint head, as with flamelets crowned, Demure, inviting—even so When merry maids in Miyako, To feel the sweet o' the year began, And green gardens to overflow, I loved you, once, in old Japan. Clear shine the hills; the rice-fields round Two cranes are circling; sleepy and slow A blue canal, the lake's blue bound, Breaks at the bamboo bridge; and lo! Touched with the sundown's spirit and glow, I see you turn with flirted fan, Against the plum tree's bloomy snow: I loved you, once, in old Japan.

Envoy.

Dear, 'twas a dozen lives ago
But that I was a lucky man,
The Toyokuni here will show;
I loved you, once, in old Japan.
W. E. HENLEY.

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